

REMARKS

This paper responds to the office action mailed July 16, 2003 ("the office action"). Claims 1-5 and 9-15 have been withdrawn in response to the election requirement. Claim 6 has been amended to correct a typographical error, and claims 16-18 have been added herein. Hence, claims 6-8 and 16-18 are currently pending. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in light of the following remarks.

Election

The office action alleged that the application contains claims directed to 8 patentably distinct species of the claimed invention (Species A-H). The office action further required election of a single species for prosecution on the merits.

In response to the election requirement, Applicants elect Species C, corresponding to Figure 5. Claims 6, 7 and 8 are believed to be readable on the elected species. The office action noted that applicant is entitled to consideration of claims to additional species that are written in dependent form or otherwise include all the limitations of an allowed generic claim, but stated that no claim appears to be generic. However, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 6 is generic to Species C, D, E and F – each of these species includes a flexible barrier with a slit therein.

New claims

New claims 16-18 have been added herein. Each of these claims reads on Species C. No new matter has been introduced via the addition of claims 16-18.

Conclusion

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at 952.474.3701 with any questions, comments or suggestions relating to the referenced patent application.

Respectfully submitted,



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